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FIRE DISTRICT OF SUN CITY WEST

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NEWSRELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
8 A.M. MT, September 14, 2010

Sun City West Fire District Child Safety Car Seat Loaner Program

(SUN CITY WEST, AZ), (SEPTEMBER 14), 2010 – During Child Passenger Safety Week (September 19-25), Sun City West Fire District is urging parents, grandparents, and caregivers to make sure their child safety seats are properly installed and correctly used in their vehicles. The goal is to make sure all children are secured properly in appropriate child safety seats, booster seats or seat belts seats – every trip, every time. “Securing your grandchildren properly in age- and size-appropriate child safety seats — in the back seat of your vehicle — is the most effective thing you can do to protect them in the event of a crash,” states Holli Sandeen, community outreach specialist. In fact, in motor vehicle crashes, child safety seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and by 54 percent for toddlers.

The good news is that a majority of grandparents buckle up their grandchildren in child safety seats, booster seats, or seat belts. However, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nearly 3 out of 4 child safety seats are not used properly, which is a grave risk when traveling.

“It’s the responsibility of every single parent, grandparent, and caregiver out there to make sure their children are safely restrained – every trip, every time,” said Sandeen. The Sun City West Fire District has a child safety car seat loaner program to insure when family members come to town children are safe riding in vehicles. The child safety car seat loaner program is available to all Sun City West Fire District residents.

- An appointment is needed for a loaner child safety seat. Appointments should be scheduled at least 3 weeks in advance (preferably as soon as you know the child

is coming to visit). Keep in mind the holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Winter Break, & Spring Break) are normally very busy so reserve your seat early.

- Please call (623) 584-3500 to schedule your appointment. The Fire District car seat technicians are available by appointments only. Car seats are installed at the Administrative Office located at 18818 N. Spanish Garden Drive. Appointments take approximately 20 minutes.
- Please bring a valid driver's license to your appointment.
- The Fire District has a variety of seats available for children under 100 pounds: front and rear facing convertible seats, highback booster seats, and backless booster seats. **Age, weight, and height of all children are required to determine the correct car seat by law and best practices.** You need to have this information available when you call to reserve the seat.

Personal child safety seat checks are also available to all Sun City West Fire District residents. For maximum child passenger safety, parents and caregivers can refer to the following *4 Steps for Kids* guidelines that determine which restraint system is best suited to protect children based on age and size:

1. For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until a minimum of age 1 and at least 20 pounds.
2. When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at a minimum age 1 and at least 20 pounds) they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).
3. Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).
4. When children outgrow their booster seats, (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall) they can use the adult seat belt in the back seat, if it fits properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

Remember: All children younger than 13 should ride in the back seat.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the Sun City West Fire District at (623) 584-3500.